

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting held at
Bredgar Primary School
On Wednesday 12th November 2014 at 7.30pm.

Present: Chairman Cllr. Mr. B. Willis, Vice Chairman Cllr. Mrs. P. Twaites, Cllr. Mr. B. Clarke, Cllr. Mrs. S. Hickman, Cllr. Mr. G. Kite, Cllr. Mr. D. Priestley and Cllr. Mr. M. Pullen.

Also Present: Cllr. Mrs. M. Bonney and Cllr. Mr. M. Baldock.

Clerk: Mrs. T. Hudson

Members of the public: There were eight members of the public present at the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from PCSO Paul Wilson.

2. Declaration of Members' personal and prejudicial interests

There were no declarations to report

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous PC meeting held on 20th August 2014 were read and formally approved by the Parish Council. They are now available on the Parish website. Proposed by Cllr. Mrs. P. Twaites, seconded by Cllr. Mr. B. Clarke. They were signed by the Chairman at the end of the meeting.

Matters Arising

New Home Starter Pack

Councillors continue to gather information to produce a Starter Pack for new residents to the village.

4. Ten minutes representation by the public

Blind Marys Lane Gypsy & Traveller site

Information received suggested that digging had taken place on site, water pipes laid, and scalpings laid to cover the work. Cllr. Bonney has raised concerns with Peter Hinckesman, SBC enforcement officer, and requested a site meeting. It transpired that Mr. Brazil had asked permission from SBC planning department to move a caravan at the site, which was denied, as permission was not given to keep a caravan there in the first place. There appeared to be a lack of communication between SBC and parishioners/councillors, as SBC had not informed interested parties of this request. A site meeting is to be arranged with Mr. Hinckesman, parishioners and councillors to confirm recent developments.

Cllr. Bonney stated that it is important for residents to attend the planning appeal at SBC offices on 3rd December at 10am to express their feelings over the delayed removal of the owners of the caravans.

Seven parishioners left the meeting following this discussion.

5. Report from PCSO Paul Wilson

PCSO Paul Wilson was unable to attend the meeting due to a change in working shift times. No report was submitted. Councillors proposed to arrange an informal meeting

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with PCSO Wilson in Bredgar café for parishioners to raise any issues within the village. An enquiry will also be made at the next Swale West Parish Group meeting into how village PCSOs can be more accessible to villagers.

6. Authorisation of Accounts

The PC approved the accounts as set out in the meeting's agenda, proposed by Cllr. M. Pullen, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Hickman.

There were no queries to report.

Financial Review

The clerk prepared a financial review for the remainder of the fiscal year. The review indicated a projected balance of £6871 carried over to the next financial year. The review assumed that the Precept remains neutral. The PC resolved to maintain the annual Precept, incorporating any CTSG, at £9000 for the forthcoming year, 2015/16. Proposed by Cllr. B. Willis, seconded by Cllr. Mrs. P. Twaites.

7. Finance

Report from the clerk:

• **Audit Return**

Although satisfied with the Audit Return, the external auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP, noted that the annual 'precept' did not agree with the figure notified to them by SBC. This refers to the Council Tax Support Grant, that is a component of the annual 'precept'. The CTSG should have been identified in the Audit Return as a component of the annual 'precept'.

• **Finance Conference**

The clerk attended the annual KALC Finance Conference. The clerk reported that it was an informative day, which highlighted good practice in the role of the Responsible Finance Officer.

Discussion and Formal Adoption of Proposed Statutory Standing Orders:

• **Open and Accountable Local Government**

The PC will discuss possible revisions to current Standing Orders at the next PC meeting with a view to any changes having effect from the next PC year.

• **Councils' Power to Discharge their Functions**

Bredgar PC does not have sub-committees at present, decisions being taken by the full Council.

• **Protocol on the Recording and Filming of Council and Committee Meetings**

A formal protocol will be discussed at the next PC meeting. However, initial discussion indicated that at subsequent meetings those present will be required to declare an intention to make an audio recording of the whole or part of the meeting. This will thus have regarding to the presence of members of the general public.

• **Financial Regulations**

The PC approved the Financial Regulations in 2011. Any changes that may reflect current recommendations, if approved by the PC, will have effect from the new PC year.

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8. Reports from Councillors

Cllr. B. Clarke

It has been difficult to find out news of progress on the installation of fibre optic broadband at the Wormshill Exchange. Cllr. Clarke will raise the issue at the Swale Rural Forum next week.

Cllr. S. Hickman

Bulbs have been planted for a colourful spring. A working party cleared overgrown foliage around the pond.

Cllr. P. Twaites

The school continues to perform well. The building project, to remodel access and install new toilet facilities, has been approved and is out to tender. It is hoped that work will begin soon and be finished by September 2015. An equipment store is to be temporarily erected at the end of the school field and a temporary road laid across the field.

Parking spaces at the village hall are to be marked out, to include two disabled spaces. The Village School asked the PC for a contribution to fund a convex mirror opposite the entrance to the village hall car park. The PC will not be involved with the provision of a mirror, but reminded the school governors that responsibility lies with the school for any arising liability.

Cllr. D. Priestley

Mitie Pest Control does not appear to have fulfilled their contract on the number of visits to the pond. Cllr. Priestley suggested terminating the contract; councillors agreed to look for a different supplier. Cllr Twaites and Priestley to advise on the termination of the Mitie contract; the Clerk to provide a copy of the contract for Cllr Twaites to review.

Cllr. M. Pullen

The light on the pond decking works intermittently. The clerk will ask the electrician to investigate. The periodic electrical inspection has been completed. The PEI certificate has yet to be received

The village hall has been painted and had new curtains hung.

The bird wire on the top of the swings has been renewed.

The Christmas tree has been ordered from the Farmshop and will be erected on 6th December.

Cllr. Mr. G. Kite

Posts have been erected to support the oak tree in the recreation ground.

A NHW sign has been placed in the vicinity of the village hall.

The road outside Burnham House has been flooded in the recent heavy rain. Ground water has been slow to disperse and the outlet from the pond has been blocked. Cllr. Pullen volunteered to clear the blockage.

9. Report from Cllr. B. Clarke – Swale West Parish Group meeting

Cllr. Clarke circulated a report to all councillors following the meeting in October. Councillors discussed the various issues:

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The advice on **Village Halls** will be passed to the Chairman of Bredgar Village Hall, as the PC is not directly involved with the day-to-day running of the hall.

It was suggested that the **Emergency Committee and Community Wardens** would have little impact on Bredgar.

The **Village Caretaker** idea would probably not be useful for Bredgar as any work required is already carried out by KCC and SBC.

Cllr. Clarke and Cllr. Twaites have drafted a response to the **Gypsy & Traveller consultation**, which the PC supports in general, but suggested that the following improvements be considered for inclusion:

- AONB should be specifically identified within paragraph 23 of the policy as receiving the highest level of protection.
- Bredgar Parish Council firmly concurs that the absence of a 5 year plan of supply of sites for gypsies and travellers should NOT be a material consideration for planning decisions for temporary or permanent sites in Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Green Belt, Local Green Space, Areas of Natural Beauty or National Parks.
- The proposed changes that adjust the balance of unmet need and personal circumstances (subject to the best interests of the child) as against harm to the Green Belt should be extended to apply also to AONB.
- Bredgar Parish Council is concerned that it will be difficult to prove that an applicant has 'chosen' to ignore planning regulations. This ambiguity may be used to cause delays in the planning processes. Therefore the PC propose that ALL retrospective planning permissions should be a significant material consideration that counts against the proposal, i.e. there is a presumption of rejection, unless clear evidence of an innocent mistake can be provided.

10. Planning

Dukes Shaw

The planning application for Dukes Shaw is to go before the Planning Committee in December. SBC Cllr Bonney to speak at that meeting and request the planning application be refused.

Primrose House

Cllr Bonney reported that discussions between the owners and SBC, to resolve Listed Building issues, continue.

Local Plan

A public consultation of the Sittingbourne Local Plan will take place between 19th December and 30th January 2015.

The 5Parishes Group is to meet in early January to discuss the Plan.

Members' training is to take place in January; Cllr. Bonney will circulate details later.

Gypsy and Traveller Policy

Cllrs Clarke and Twaites prepared BPC's response to the consultation by SBC. The PC resolved to submit the response to SBC. Refer to Item 9.

11. Recreation Ground: Fete Committee

The Fete Committee has yet to provide details of a bank account for the PC to transfer the sum of £800 held in trust.

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12. Cemetery

Cemetery Charges

The cemetery charges are to be raised in line with SBC charges on 1st April 2015.

Proposed by Cllr. M. Pullen, seconded by Cllr. B. Clarke.

The new cemetery gates have been installed, the insurance claim has yet to be finalised.

In due course the PC will consider that replacement of the highway boundary railings as a possible capital project.

13. War Memorial Restoration update

The restoration of Bredgar War Memorial has been successfully carried out. The PC thanked local councillors Mr. Baldock, Mrs. Bonney and Mr. Burgess for SBC and KCC grant contributions to the restoration.

The lettering has been repainted; full stops are yet to be completed. Councillors thanked Cllr. Priestley for research; Cllrs Clarke and Kite for watering the new turf; Mrs. Priestley for painting the posts and chains and Cllr. Willis for coordinating the work.

14. KHS

Resurfacing of Swanton Street/Hollingbourne Road

Chairman, Cllr. Willis, prepared a map showing the areas of the road, from Blind Marys Lane junction to the Hollingbourne water tower, which required work to be carried out and circulated this to Parish councillors and Cllr. Baldock who took up the matter with KHS.

A resident at Swanton Street has suffered three floods to his workshop and garden in the recent heavy rain.

KHS recognised that the work should be carried out. It is understood that essential repairs will be done immediately and further resurfacing/surface dressing work carried out in the next financial year.

15. Any Other Business

Village Inspection

Cllr. Mr. Baldock offered to attend a village inspection with Bredgar Councillors to look at any outstanding issues that might require financial assistance from a Member's grant. Councillors arranged to meet on Saturday 29th November at 10am at the pond.

Bredgar Post Office (Written by Chairman Cllr. Mr. Beverley Willis).

Teresa Hudson [PC Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, and Sub-Postmaster] advised the PC of the following matters. Personal or prejudicial interests were not declared by Mrs Hudson.

- 1 At a meeting between the Sub-postmaster and a representative – Mr Keith Long - from The Post Office [the PC were not aware of this meeting nor invited to attend]. Mr Long outlined to Mrs Hudson the emerging national policy for Main and Local post offices. It appears that Bredgar's post office will in due course have to become a Local post office formally part of the Farmshop retail business.

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- 2 Mrs Hudson has signed a consent Form giving the Post Office permission to advertise a vacancy for a Local Post Office sub-postmaster.

BPC instructed Mrs Hudson to arrange a meeting with Mr Long such that the PC could discover the precise intention of the Post Office in respect to Bredgar's post office.

16. Next meetings

The next meetings will be:

14.01.2015

18.03.2015 - & Parish Open Meeting

13.05.2015 – AGM.